



General Assembly

February Session, 2014

***Raised Bill No. 5564***

LCO No. 2497



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:  
(ED)

***AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL SAFETY.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1       Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) For the fiscal year ending June  
2       30, 2015, the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection  
3       shall establish a safe travel to school grant program to provide grants  
4       to towns for expenses incurred as part of improving student safety  
5       along routes of travel to schools and in the immediate areas around  
6       schools during the hours before and after regular school hours.
- 7       (b) On or before July 15, 2014, a town may submit an application, at  
8       such time and in such manner as the department prescribes, to the  
9       department for a grant pursuant to this section. Each application shall  
10      include a plan for the improvement of student safety along routes of  
11      travel to school and in the immediate areas around schools during the  
12      hours before and after regular school hours. Such plan shall (1) be  
13      developed by the town in consultation with the local law enforcement  
14      agency and local or regional board of education for such town, (2)  
15      include the travel routes to schools and the areas around such schools  
16      that will be covered by such plan, (3) establish the hours before and

17 after school that supervision may be provided along such travel routes  
18 and areas around such schools, and (4) require that any person  
19 assisting in the implementation of such plan submit to state and  
20 national criminal history records checks prior to implementation of  
21 such plan.

22 (c) Not later than August 1, 2014, the department shall select up to  
23 ten towns to receive grants under this section and shall give priority to  
24 towns in which priority school districts are located or towns in which a  
25 priority school is located.

26 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) The Department of Emergency  
27 Services and Public Protection shall assist the United Way of  
28 Connecticut in including a student safety hotline as part of the 2-1-1  
29 Infoline program. Such student safety hotline shall receive calls from  
30 students and the parents or guardians of students who suspect or have  
31 reason to believe that the health and safety of students and faculty at a  
32 school may be at risk of violence or the unlawful use of a weapon, as  
33 defined in section 29-38 of the general statutes.

34 Sec. 3. Section 84 of public act 13-3, as amended by section 15 of  
35 public act 13-122 and section 191 of public act 13-247, is repealed and  
36 the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

37 (a) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2013, to June 30, 2015,  
38 inclusive, the Departments of Emergency Services and Public  
39 Protection, Construction Services and Education shall jointly  
40 administer a school security infrastructure competitive grant program  
41 to reimburse (1) towns for certain expenses for schools under the  
42 jurisdiction of the town's school district incurred on or after January 1,  
43 2013, and (2) the supervisory agent for nonpublic schools for certain  
44 expenses incurred on or after January 1, 2013, for: [(1)] (A) The  
45 development or improvement of the security infrastructure of schools,  
46 based on the results of school building security assessments pursuant  
47 to subsection (c) of this section, including, but not limited to, the

48 installation of surveillance cameras, penetration resistant vestibules,  
49 ballistic glass, solid core doors, double door access, computer-  
50 controlled electronic locks, entry door buzzer systems, scan card  
51 systems, panic alarms or other systems; and [(2) (A)] (B) (i) the training  
52 of school personnel in the operation and maintenance of the security  
53 infrastructure of school buildings, or [(B)] (ii) the purchase of portable  
54 entrance security devices, including, but not limited to, metal detector  
55 wands and screening machines and related training.

56 (b) On and after the effective date of this section, each local and  
57 regional board of education [may,] on behalf of its town or its member  
58 towns [,] and supervisory agent for a nonpublic school, may apply, at  
59 such time and in such manner as the Commissioner of Emergency  
60 Services and Public Protection prescribes, to the Department of  
61 Emergency Services and Public Protection for a grant for certain  
62 expenses for schools under the jurisdiction of such board of education  
63 or supervisory agent incurred on and after January 1, 2013, for the  
64 purposes described in subsection (a) of this section. Ten per cent of the  
65 funds available under this program shall be awarded to the  
66 supervisory agents of nonpublic schools, in accordance with the  
67 provisions of subdivision (2) of subsection (c) of this section. Prior to  
68 the date that the School Safety Infrastructure Council makes its initial  
69 submission of the school safety infrastructure standards, pursuant to  
70 subsection (c) of section 80 of public act 13-3, the Commissioner of  
71 Emergency Services and Public Protection, in consultation with the  
72 Commissioners of Construction Services and Education, shall  
73 determine which expenses are eligible for reimbursement under the  
74 program. On and after the date that the School Safety Infrastructure  
75 Council submits the school safety infrastructure standards, the  
76 decision to approve or deny an application and the determination of  
77 which expenses are eligible for reimbursement under the program  
78 shall be in accordance with the most recent submission of the school  
79 safety infrastructure standards, pursuant to subsection (c) of section 80  
80 of public act 13-3.

81 (c) (1) A town may receive a grant equal to a percentage of its  
82 eligible expenses. The percentage shall be determined as follows: [(1)]  
83 (A) Each town shall be ranked in descending order from one to one  
84 hundred sixty-nine according to town wealth, as defined in  
85 subdivision (26) of section 10-262f of the general statutes, [(2)] (B)  
86 based upon such ranking, a percentage of not less than twenty or more  
87 than eighty shall be assigned to each town on a continuous scale, and  
88 [(3)] (C) the town ranked first shall be assigned a percentage of twenty  
89 and the town ranked last shall be assigned a percentage of eighty.

90 (2) The supervisory agent for a nonpublic school may receive a  
91 grant equal to fifty per cent of its eligible expenses.

92 (d) If there are not sufficient funds to provide grants to all towns  
93 and supervisory agents for nonpublic schools based on the percentage  
94 determined pursuant to [this] subsection (c) of this section, the  
95 Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, in  
96 consultation with the Commissioners of Construction Services and  
97 Education, shall give priority to applicants on behalf of schools with  
98 the greatest need for security infrastructure, as determined by said  
99 commissioners based on school building security assessments of the  
100 schools under the jurisdiction of the town's school district conducted  
101 pursuant to this subsection. Of the applicants on behalf of such schools  
102 with the greatest need for security infrastructure, said commissioners  
103 shall give first priority to applicants on behalf of schools that have no  
104 security infrastructure at the time of such school building security  
105 assessment and succeeding priority to applicants on behalf of schools  
106 located in priority school districts pursuant to section 10-266p of the  
107 general statutes. To be eligible for reimbursement pursuant to this  
108 section, an applicant board of education or supervisory agent shall  
109 [(A)] (1) demonstrate that it has developed and periodically practices  
110 an emergency plan at the schools under its jurisdiction and that such  
111 plan has been developed in concert with applicable state or local first-  
112 responders, and [(B)] (2) provide for a uniform assessment of the  
113 schools under its jurisdiction, including any security infrastructure,

114 using the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities' Safe  
115 Schools Facilities Check List. The assessment shall be conducted under  
116 the supervision of the local law enforcement agency.

117 Sec. 4. Subsection (c) of section 10-222d of the general statutes is  
118 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*  
119 *passage*):

120 (c) Not later than ~~[January 1, 2012]~~ July 1, 2014, each local and  
121 regional board of education shall ~~[approve]~~ submit the safe school  
122 climate plan developed pursuant to this section ~~[and submit such plan]~~  
123 to the Department of Education for approval in accordance with  
124 section 5 of this act. Not later than thirty calendar days after approval  
125 of ~~[such]~~ the safe school climate plan by the ~~[local or regional board of~~  
126 ~~education]~~ department, the board shall make such plan available on  
127 the board's and each individual school in the school district's Internet  
128 web site and ensure that such plan is included in the school district's  
129 publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for  
130 schools and in all student handbooks.

131 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Department of  
132 Education shall receive and review each safe school climate plan  
133 submitted pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-222d of the general  
134 statutes, as amended by this act. The department may approve or  
135 reject a safe school climate plan if such plan does not adequately  
136 ensure a safe school climate at the schools under the jurisdiction of the  
137 board of education submitting such plan. If the department rejects a  
138 safe school climate plan submitted by a local or regional board of  
139 education, such board of education shall redevelop and resubmit the  
140 safe school climate plan to the department for approval not later than  
141 thirty calendar days after such rejection. If the department rejects such  
142 resubmitted plan, such board of education shall adopt the model safe  
143 school climate plan, developed by the department pursuant to  
144 subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of section 10-222h of the general  
145 statutes, as amended by this act.

146 (b) The Department of Education shall make available on the  
147 department's Internet web site (1) each safe school climate plan that  
148 has been approved by the department, (2) a list of the school districts  
149 that have an approved safe school climate plan, and (3) a list of the  
150 school districts whose safe school climate plan has been rejected and is  
151 in the process of resubmitting its safe school climate plan for approval  
152 by the department.

153 Sec. 6. Section 10-222h of the 2014 supplement to the general statutes  
154 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*  
155 *from passage*):

156 (a) The Department of Education shall, within available  
157 appropriations, (1) document school districts' articulated needs for  
158 technical assistance and training related to safe learning and bullying,  
159 (2) collect information on the prevention and intervention strategies  
160 used by schools to reduce the incidence of bullying, improve school  
161 climate and improve reporting outcomes, (3) develop or recommend a  
162 model safe school climate plan for grades kindergarten to twelve,  
163 inclusive, and (4) in collaboration with the Connecticut Association of  
164 Schools, disseminate to all public schools grade-level appropriate  
165 school climate assessment instruments approved by the department,  
166 including surveys that collect information about students' perspectives  
167 and opinions about the school climate at the school, to be used by local  
168 and regional boards of education for the purposes of collecting  
169 information described in subdivision (2) of this subsection so that the  
170 department can monitor bullying prevention efforts over time and  
171 compare each district's progress to state trends.

172 (b) On or before February 1, 2014, and annually thereafter, the  
173 department shall, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a,  
174 submit a report on the status of its efforts pursuant to this section  
175 including, but not limited to, the number of verified acts of bullying in  
176 the state, an analysis of the responsive action taken by school districts,  
177 an analysis of student perspectives and opinions about school climate

178 at schools and any recommendations it may have regarding additional  
 179 activities or funding to prevent bullying in schools and improve school  
 180 climate to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly  
 181 having cognizance of matters relating to education and children and to  
 182 the speaker of the House of Representatives, the president pro tempore  
 183 of the Senate and the majority and minority leaders of the House of  
 184 Representatives and the Senate.

185 (c) The department may accept private donations for the purposes  
 186 of this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	PA 13-3, Sec. 84
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	10-222d(c)
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	10-222h

***Statement of Purpose:***

To establish a safe travel to school grant program, to include a student safety hotline as part of the 2-1-1 Infoline program to include nonpublic schools as eligible recipients for a school security infrastructure grant, to establish an approval process for safe school climate plans submitted by local and regional boards of education to the Department of Education, to require school climate assessment surveys to include students' perspectives and opinions, and to require the Department of Education to analyze student perspectives and opinions about school climate in its annual report on school climate.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*